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Consciousness and the Cognitive Revolution: A True Worldview Paradigm Shift

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Abstract: Traditional scientific views of the conscious self and world we live in are suddenly being challenged by an unprecedented outburst of "emerging new paradigms", theories of consciousness, perceptions of reality, new sciences, new philosophies, epistemologies, and a host of other transformative approaches. This still-expanding outburst can be traced, on both logical and chronologic grounds, not to chaos theory, ecology, the new physics, or dozens of other currently ascribed sources, but rather to the cognitive(consciousness) revolution that immediately preceded. These new approaches all share one key feature in common, namely, they all depend, directly or indirectly, upon a refutation and successful overthrow of the long dominant materialist paradigm. This is what was required to shift consciousness from an acausal or 'eliminable' status to a functionally indispensible role. Traditional 'below-up' micro-determinism had to be supplemented by a reciprocal, 'down-level' control exerted by mental emergents over lower-level components. This does not dispose of behaviorism or reductionism, as methodology, but simply incorporates these within a more comprehensive explanatory framework. With the long reign of materialist constraints finally broken, other antireductive views have proliferated but with little regard for what the new paradigm allows.